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**PRESS RELEASE  
For Immediate Release**

**Feb 28, 2007  
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## **San Francisco School Building Receives Design Award**

Bessie Carmichael Elementary, a public school building in San Francisco's South of Market district, has received an award for the design of one of its newest buildings.

The award, called "C.A.S.H/AIACC Leroy F. Green Excellence in Design Award," (<http://www.cashnet.org>) is given to California schools that show exceptional architecture in public school facilities. Bessie Carmichael was one of only five newly-built schools to be chosen this year.

David Goldin, Chief Facilities Officer for SFUSD, accepted the award on behalf of the school at a ceremony in Sacramento on February 28, 2007.

"San Francisco Unified School District works hard to maintain high standards of design," said Goldin. "We are fortunate to live in a beautiful city. Our schools are an important part of what characterizes San Francisco."

The new Bessie Carmichael building, located at 375 7<sup>th</sup> St., near Harrison Street in San Francisco, opened in August 2004 (<http://portal.sfusd.edu/template/default.cfm?page=es.carmichael>).

To meet requirements for the award, the design needed to include broad community input and enhance the school district's educational goals. SFUSD educational goals include improving student achievement and maintaining a safe learning environment.

The only school in a growing South of Market neighborhood, Bessie Carmichael was originally built in the late 1950's. Several years ago community members began meeting with SFUSD and the local architecture firm Kwan Henmi Architects/Planning, Inc. to discuss a new building.

Kwan/Henmi Project architect Jim Fong said the site had its challenges.

"It is a very tight site with exposure to a busy street, so we used alleys on the same block to create safe drop-off places for Kindergarten and Pre-school parents." He also noted that, once built, different parts of the building were painted red, blue and yellow to help people find their way around.

In addition, Fong said that San Francisco’s Recreation and Parks Department wanted part of the block for a much-needed outdoor recreation space. So, when the school moved out of its temporary bungalows and into the new building, Rec and Park took the empty site and made a new outdoor park, which the students can use during the day. Bessie Carmichael shares its multi-purpose room (combination auditorium and lunch room) with Rec and Park during the evenings.

Fong added that everyone is pleased with how the multi-purpose Room turned out. “It’s flooded with natural light. It has vaulted ceilings and large glass garage-type doors that allow an easy indoor and outdoor flow.”

(For more information on the design, visit [www.kwanhenmi.com/portfolio/education/bessie.php](http://www.kwanhenmi.com/portfolio/education/bessie.php))

Bessie Carmichael was also built to satisfy the Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS) guidelines to create a sustainable and healthy environment for students, faculty, staff and community members.

SFUSD has completed about a dozen new buildings or additions in the school district over the last ten years. Another elementary school, Alice Fong Yu in the Inner Sunset District, received a C.A.S.H/AIACC Leroy F. Green Excellence in Design Award in 2002.

The Coalition for Adequate School Housing (CASH) and American Institute of Architects, California Council (AIACC) have been honoring well-designed California schools for ten years.



*Photo courtesy SFUSD*

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